

Remarks/Arguments

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1 to 11, 13, 17, and 19-20 will be pending in the present patent application. Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of claim 12, which has been indicated as allowable by the Action. Claim 18 has been canceled, without prejudice.

Discussion of the Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 17, and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over German Patent No. DE 145348 to Bigl et al. ("the Bigl patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that the claims are unpatentable over the Bigl patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Bigl patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,176,790 ("the 790 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that claims 3 and 4 are unpatentable over the Bigl patent combined with the 790 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Bigl patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,403,491 to Liu et al. ("the 491 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that claim 7 is unpatentable over the Bigl patent combined with the 491 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Bigl patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,242,359 to Mlsra et al. ("the 359 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that claims 9 and 10 are

unpatentable over the Bigl patent combined with the 359 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Miscellaneous

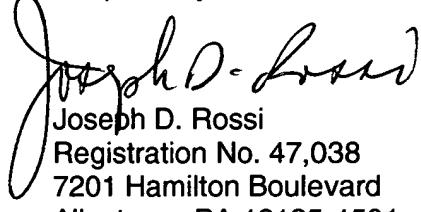
The Action indicates that claims 19 and 20 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Applicants' representative, the undersigned, requested clarification because claims 19 and 20 are independent claims. On July 31, 2006, Examiner Umez-Eronini left a voice mail message confirming that claims 19 and 20 were objected to in error and that they should have been indicated as allowable. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Umez-Eronini for this clarification.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the foregoing constitutes a complete and full response to the Action of record. Applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an indication of allowability and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee required and any additional fees that may be needed to Deposit Account No. 01-0493 in the name of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,



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